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Job Happiness Among Local Youth in Sabah and Sarawak Towards Working in Oil Palm Plantation

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Abstract

The rapid expansion of oil palm plantation in Malaysia in 1990, 2.03 million hectares to 5.73 million hectares in 2016¹ caused required high labour intensive in this sector. Sabah and Sarawak were the main contributor of oil palm plantation which represented 33.30 percent among the states of Malaysia. More than 78% of labours (Azman, 2014) in these sectors mainly came from Indonesia, Bangladesh and Philippines and most of the local youth refused to participate in an oil palm plantation due to the working environment compared to manufacturing sector which more conducive. Hence, this contributes instability and unsustainability in the oil palm industry due to more dependence on foreign labour. The negative perception of local youth on nature of work and social status as a 4D job (Difficult, Dangerous, Dirty and Demeaning) made this working in oil palm plantation is the last choice of job among those who were still working and already left from oil palm plantation (Zaki et al., 2015). Thus, the objective of this paper is to explore the level of job happiness among oil palm plantation local youth which still working and those who left in this both states and analysing the factors contribute to their satisfaction and happiness level. The purposive randomised sampling among the 98

local youths aged ranging from 16 to 40 years old which was considered as the youth category and staying within the location 5 kilometres radius within the plantation area those who are still working and working before in this oil palm sector. The Partial Least Square was used to analyse the satisfaction and happiness level among this category of this group. The result found those who left from working in the plantation sector showed more significant value compared to those who are still working. This showed the construction reflects the satisfaction and happiness level if the plantation sector fulfilled the intrinsic factors of job satisfaction and happiness.

Key words: Happiness; Local youth; Oil palm; Job happiness; Partial least square

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INTRODUCTION

Oil palm industry is a major contributor in the export of Malaysian agriculture. As of 2016, total planted oil palm in Malaysia is about 5.73 million (MPOB, 2017). The rapid expansion in this sector contributed job opportunity due to labour intensive. At present most of the labour in the plantation were filled by the foreign labour. Based on Azman (2014), only 22% were local workers, and 78% were foreign labour from Indonesia, Philippines and Myanmar. This scenario contributed negative impact if to dependence on foreign labour especially in Indonesia during Eid Festival when they took long leaves. During the festive season, the sector declined 60% of the fresh fruit bunch production of oil palm (Faizah, 2010). The total of 42,707 of labour shortage was reported in 2010

¹ MPOB 2017 Malaysia Oil Palm Statistic 2017.

(Ramli et al., 2011). This contributes a negative impact if the oil palm industry and cannot be sustained if still depend on foreign labour especially Indonesian workers (Mohammad Amizi et al., 2016).

Most of the plantation workers especially local youth those who work in the plantation and still working in the plantation left this work and migrated to the urban area and work in the manufacturing sector and servicing sector which more conducive. Based on Kabita (2014), most of the Indian local youth work in an oil palm plantation left the plantation and shifted the job in servicing sector. Thus, this study provides the recommendation to oil palm industry based on the result analysis within these two groups of local youth which still working and those who left from this job. This will assist the industry to sustain especially those who are still working in an oil palm plantation based on happiness factor.

1. METHODOLOGY

Research using surveying through questionnaire was applied as the core methodology to acquire the raw data

from the selected respondents based on a purposive randomised sampling technique to those who are still working and left the job in the oil palm plantation sector. 98 respondents ranging from 16 to 40 years old were selected from a local youth from Sabah and Sarawak which located in East Malaysia and staying within the location 5 kilometres radius within the plantation area. Based on the study by Houghton (1993), the distance affects the availability of the labour market within the industry. From the 98 respondents, 66 respondents still working in the oil palm plantation and 32 respondents left the job in an oil palm plantation. All the data were coded based on a questionnaire and then entered into a Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) software. To analyse the factors affecting the happiness of the workers working in the plantation sector by applying Partial Least Square (PLS) used Smart PLS Software. The Figure 1 showed the model assumes the dimension of job happiness among the respondents who are still working and left the job in the oil palm plantation and the causal factors which influenced the job happiness between two groups of respondents. Table 1 showed the construction measurement indicated in this model.

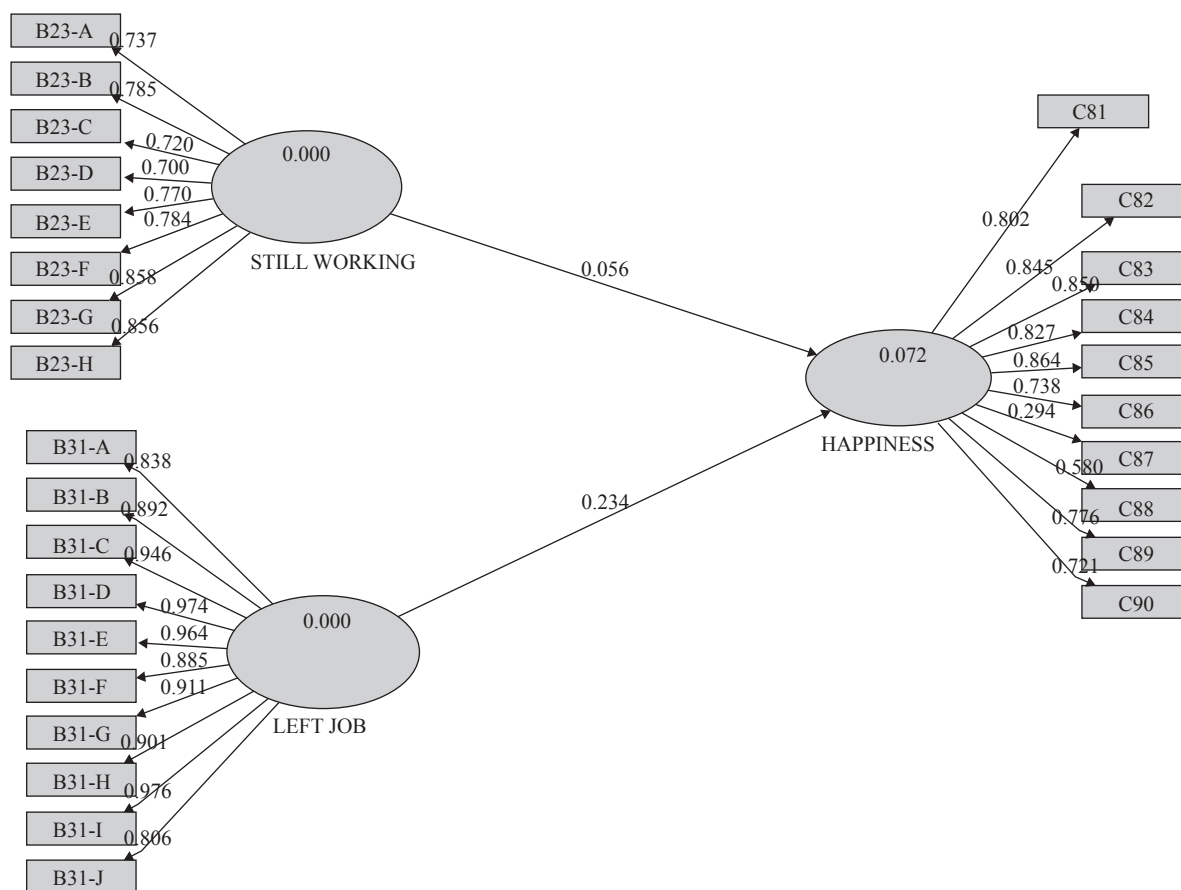


Figure 1
Model of Factors Influence the Job Happiness Among the Local Youth Which Participated Labour Force in Oil Palm Plantation

Table 1
The Construct Measurement

Construct	Items	Codes
Still working on plantation	Causal factor still working in plantation	B23-A
	1. No suitable job	B23-B
	2. No qualification	B23-C
	3. Near working place	B23-D
	4. Provided facilities	B23-E
	5. Do not want to stay away from family	B23-F
	6. Social influence	B23-G
	7. Not interested in working in the city	B23-H
Left job from oil palm plantation	Causal factors left job from plantation	B31-A
	1. Uncertain income	B31-B
	2. Future not guaranteed	B31-C
	3. Social influence	B31-D
	4. No entertainment	B31-E
	5. Transfer to manufacturing sector	B31-F
	6. Transfer to government sector	B31-G
	7. Transfer to private sector	B31-H
	8. Plantation policy unattractive	B31-I
	9. Fighting among colleagues	B31-I
10 Others	B31- J	
Job happiness	1. I feel happy to work in the oil palm plantation sector	C81
	2. Working on the farm gives me satisfaction.	C82
	3. I will continue to work in oil palm plantation sector	C83
	4. I would invite and influence friends/family to work in the plantation sector	C84
	5. I am willing to work overtime at the farm	C85
	6. I intend to encourage children to get involved in the plantation work	C86
	7. I will always make sure that all levels of society understand and respect plantation work	C87
	8. I am willing to motivate youth to engage in plantation sector	C88
	9. I feel this is the only work that suitable with my soul	C89
	10. I feel incoherent if I'm on the farm for an extended time.	C90

2. RESULTS

Based on Table 2 shows Cronbach's Alpha of each construct in a measurement model were shown all constructs are more than the threshold values which more than 0.7. The result of Cronbach's Alpha shows positive internal consistencies on the studied components of every studied component since the estimated values of coefficient alpha were higher than the standard index of reliability test which is 0.6 (Nunnally, 1978). Hence, this indicates that all of the constructs have higher levels of reliability. This shows that there was consistency among the happiness of these two group of local youths used in the study of job happiness to work in oil palm plantation and it can conclude that the study based on constructs the items in the questionnaires is fit for this objectives.

Table 2
Internal Consistency Reliability: Cronbach's Alpha

Construct	Cronbach's Alpha
Happiness dependent variable	0.9150
Left job independent variable	0.9768
Still working independent variables	0.9114

Average Variance Extracted (AVE) for the measurement model construction. AVE was equivalent to the communality of each of the construct. Table 3

shows AVE's values for happiness construction, left job construction and still working construction in Table 3 indicates that all the AVE's values are greater than 0.5. Thus reports that the construction explains more than half of the variance of its items were reliable.

Table 3
Average Variance Extracted (AVE) of Each Construct

Constructs	AVE
Happiness	0.5612
Left job	0.8299
Still working	0.6016

The Fornell-Larcker is a second criterion to assess discriminant validity. As shown in Table 4, the square root of AVE for each construct is showed in the diagonal box. The square root of AVE's for each construct is 0.7491, 0.9109 and 0.7756. These values indicate that this measurement model is free from discriminant validity problem. Hence can be proceeded with structural model assessment.

Table 4
Fornell-Larcker

	Happiness	Left job	Still working
Happiness	0.7491		
Left Job	0.2636	0.9109	
Still working	0.1808	0.5328	0.7756

The Variance Inflation Factor of this study showed all the constructs in the structural model should be less than 5.0 (Hair et al., 2014). All the values in this Variance Inflation Factor are ranged from 1.164 to 1.906 for happiness, left the job and still working. Thus, all constructs are free from collinearity problem.

The path coefficient values for respondents who were still working and respondents who left the job

were 0.0564 and 0.2335 respectively. Both of the constructs showed the t-values of 0.2381 and 2.0795. From this Table 5 showed that still working constructs is not significant compared to the constructs that left the job. The construct contains insignificant t-value for the respondents who are still working. This indicates that still working construction does not give an impact towards happiness construction.

Table 5
Path Coefficients

	Path coefficients	t-value	Significant
Left job -> happiness	0.2335	2.0795	Significant
Still working -> happiness	0.0564	0.2381	Not Significant

The level of prediction accuracy of the structural model was determined by the coefficient of determination (R^2) value was showed R^2 value 0.0717. This meant that only 7.17% of the model was explained by still working constructs and left the job to construct towards job happiness construction. This showed the relation between the construction with job happiness was weak. However, there is no guarantee that the value of the Coefficient Determination is indicating that the indicator on Goodness of Fit. Similarly, there is no guarantee that low R^2 values show weak relationships since changes in dependent variables mostly influence statistics. This usually occurs in studies involving social sciences (Hair et al., 2014).

CONCLUSION

This study showed the local youth left the job had more significant towards job happiness compared to the local youth who is still working in the oil palm plantation. The causal factor of this local youth left the plantation due to the social influence, negative perception of the future and changed the work of environment in manufacturing; private and government sector which more conducive. Most of the local youth in Sabah and Sarawak preferred to work in the urban area especially in Peninsular Malaysia compared to work in the oil palm plantation. Thus, to retain existing employees and to sustain the local youth in oil palm plantation sector, wages or salaries and other incentives need to be competitive with another sector. This indicates the local youth who left the job still hopes to be coming back to work in the oil palm plantation if the oil palm plantation can fulfil the need and solve in social issues. The modernization and urbanisation in oil palm plantation can be increased the job happiness level among the local youth to work in the oil palm plantation.

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